



**Bringing faster broadband to our rural areas**

## **Project Update March 2020**

**Please forward this email to your contacts –  
we need to spread the word!**

If you would like a Word version of this newsletter please email: [broadband@cswbroadband.org.uk](mailto:broadband@cswbroadband.org.uk)

[Sign up to receive this e-newsletter](#) direct to your inbox and for information about progress on your cabinet or exchange-only line.

**Over 72,000 properties able to connect to the fibre network**

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### **CSW Project updates – Contract 3**

Another 12 Contract 3 cabinets / structures have gone live since the last newsletter was sent out at the end of January. Communities benefiting from these upgrades included parts of:

Barford (Wasperton Lane area), Caldecote, Hampton in Arden, Kingsbury, Spenal, Stretton on Dunsmore and Wormleighton.

Over 72,000 properties across the region are now able to connect to the fibre network thanks to the work of the CSW Broadband Project.

As always, once we have received confirmation that a particular cabinet or structure upgrade has been completed, we will inform as many of the affected residents as possible.

Remember, once your property has been upgraded, you won't get a faster service automatically. You need to order the improved service with your chosen ISP (Internet Service Provider) to benefit from the upgrade.

To check on your property's superfast status, enter your landline number or address into the [BT Broadband Availability Checker](#). Our [How to use the BT Broadband Availability Checker](#) webpage will help you make sense of the Broadband Checker results.

You might like to use a broadband comparison site such as [MoneySavingExpert.com](#), [Broadband Choices](#), [Broadband Genie](#), [Choose](#) or [uSwitch](#) to find a fibre broadband package to suit you and your family's needs.

If your property has benefited from an FTTP upgrade, our [Ordering an FTTP service](#) webpage provides you with all the information you need.

Finally, it should be noted that we are fully expecting the deployment of the fibre network in our area - as with the rest of the UK - to slow down significantly in the coming weeks and possibly months as government restrictions come into play to try and halt the spread of the coronavirus / Covid 19 pandemic across the UK.

Our build partners, Openreach, may have to prioritise their network support to critical services such as the NHS, emergency services, the armed forces, key utilities and banking services, as well as enabling much of the wider UK to work from home wherever possible. We will obviously keep you updated on any major developments as and when they happen via email.

## CSW Project updates – LFFN Programme

After a number of delays, we have finally signed our Local Full Fibre Networks (LFFN) programme contract with Openreach.

The LFFN programme is designed to stimulate commercial investment in full fibre networks in both rural and urban locations across the whole of the UK.

CSW will be using the £5.7 million we were awarded, in line with Government requirements to bring full fibre gigabit connectivity to 320 public sector buildings across the region - 250 in Warwickshire and 70 in Solihull.

It is hoped that with the new full fibre network in place that suppliers will then use it as a springboard to bring full fibre to residents and businesses in the wider community as well.

We've already held a kick-off meeting with Openreach to get the ball rolling on this and the plan is to start site surveys soon with the first full-fibre connections being completed later this year. However, once again, the proposed timetable may be subject to delay depending on how badly the UK is hit by the coronavirus and the government restrictions in place to tackle it.

## Coronavirus – Will UK Broadband networks cope with increased levels of home working?

Over the last couple of weeks a number of websites and newspapers have run stories claiming that the UK's broadband networks 'will be unable to cope' if millions of us start working from home during the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak. However, as ISP Review's [Covid-19 – Home Working Probably Won't Break UK Broadband](#) article suggests, such reports can be misleading.

Amongst other things, it notes how the vast majority of work that ordinary people tend to do – e.g. sending/receiving emails, database updates, replying to online messages, writing reports - is fairly lightweight in terms of its data impact upon a broadband network.

A bigger challenge could occur when the demands of greater remote working clash with those of a typical family environment (heavy video streaming and downloads etc.) particularly as coronavirus has now

resulted in the closure of schools. This may cause a slowdown in service speeds at some providers on some connections but they should still be able to cope.

ISP Review contacted a number of UK broadband ISPs for their views and the general consensus seems to be that none are particularly worried and all say they can increase capacity to cope with rising demand and that consumers shouldn't expect their broadband service to break down.

## Coronavirus – How can we stay in virtual touch with older relatives?

As the government continues to encourage “social distancing” in the fight against coronavirus, older people (and now much of the rest of the population) are facing the prospect of being told to stay at home for weeks, possibly months.

One way that they can stay in touch with their loved ones is by getting a specialised device to make video calls, as outlined in a BBC website article on [how to stay in virtual touch with older relatives](#), published last week.

The article gives information and advice on the advantages and disadvantages on a number of different solutions to help you stay in touch during these difficult times. For those of you reading a Word version of the newsletter, you can find out more information at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-51933618>

## Ordering an FTTP service – valuable information for customers

If your property has benefited from a Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) upgrade, the process for installing ‘full fibre’ services inside your home involves a number of steps and may vary slightly depending on which internet service provider (ISP) you decide to go with.

Whichever ISP you choose to provide your service however, the installation process will typically be similar to that shown in Openreach's [‘Installing Full Fibre to your premises’](#) video.

The number of ISPs offering FTTP services is still quite limited at this moment in time. However, ISP Review announced last month that [Sky Broadband UK will soon be launching FTTP services](#) via Openreach's national FTTP network. This will provide consumers with more choice and hopefully more competitively priced packages as well.

In fact, hot on the heels of this announcement, ISP Review ran another story suggesting that [Openreach are planning on offering big discounts on their own FTTP broadband packages](#) later this year.

Our [Ordering an FTTP service](#) webpage provides further information about the installation process as well as details of all the FTTP service providers who have stated that they currently offer residential and business packages in our area.

## Email address charges branded ‘daylight robbery’

Ofcom is writing to broadband companies to ask why [some customers are having to pay to keep their old email addresses](#).

The communications regulator found that of the big four providers who supply 90% of the UK's net-using homes with broadband, TalkTalk charges £5 a month and BT charges £7.50 a month if customers switch providers but want to keep using their email addresses as before.

Virgin deletes the email addresses it gives to customers 90 days after they leave, while Sky lets customers keep theirs for free.

As well as customers having to pay to keep their old email addresses, another possible concern for Ofcom is the risk that customers are being put off switching providers to get better broadband deals because of the hassle of losing their existing email addresses.

Ofcom can't see any reason why customers should have to pay to keep their email address and are looking further into this to consider whether they need to step in and take action.

## Copy for your own website or newsletter

As always, we have a range of [short articles of around 300 words that can be downloaded](#) for use in your own newsletters / websites should you wish to use them.

## Questions and Answers

Here are some of the Questions and Answers (Q&A's) that residents have raised recently. Our website has a full set of [Frequently Asked Questions](#), which are regularly updated.

### How do I switch to a different broadband provider?

You may wish to transfer broadband for a variety of reasons, such as:

- Poor quality of service
- You need additional features that your current internet service provider (ISP) does not offer
- You think the deal you are subscribed to is not providing good value for money
- You are moving house/business premises

First of all, check if the contract period you signed for with your existing supplier has expired. Contracts are generally for either 12 or 18 months. Most contracts require you to give a month's notice, even after the initial 12 or 18 months.

If it hasn't expired, you may be liable for a cancellation fee or even the balance of the fee until the contract runs out. It's your choice if you decide you want to buy yourself out of a contract that hasn't yet expired.

It is also important that you check that the new service you wish to sign up to is available in your area. A couple of useful and impartial sources of advice are the [Which? broadband speed checker](#) and [Moneysaving Expert](#) which has lots of advice about switching provider.

You can also use a variety of comparison websites and we've listed a few below. Please remember that some comparison sites work by receiving a commission from the ISPs and may not list all of the available options. You may therefore want to try several such sites before making your final decision.

- [www.moneysupermarket.com/broadband](http://www.moneysupermarket.com/broadband)
- [www.uswitch.com/broadband/](http://www.uswitch.com/broadband/)
- [www.broadbandgenie.co.uk](http://www.broadbandgenie.co.uk)
- [www.broadband-finder.co.uk](http://www.broadband-finder.co.uk)
- [www.broadbandchoices.co.uk](http://www.broadbandchoices.co.uk)
- [www.broadbanddeals.co.uk](http://www.broadbanddeals.co.uk)

### Can CSW Broadband influence how much suppliers charge for their services?

We have no influence over the prices charged by commercial providers. Our role is to extend the wholesale fibre network as far as possible, and we are doing this through the contracts that we hold with Openreach.

As access to the network is available to all suppliers on an equal basis it is a purely commercial decision on the part of an ISP (Internet Service Provider) as to which packages they offer and at which price range.

The best thing is to shop around to find a deal that is right for you (see previous FAQ above for links to comparison sites/websites offering impartial advice).

Of course you could always try haggling with your ISP to try to get a better deal. Back in our September newsletter, we noted how ISP Review had recently published an article on [the best UK Broadband Providers to haggle with](#) and also provided some [Tips for Cutting Your Broadband Bill Without Switching ISP](#).

MoneySavingExpert.com have also recently published an article on [broadband haggling](#) which provides top tips for slashing your internet and line rental bills.

You can find more [frequently asked broadband questions](#) on our website.

## Help us to spread the word!

We need to reach as many people as we possibly can. You can help us by emailing this to all your local contacts and encouraging them to email it to all their contacts.

## Why not join the CSW Broadband conversation on social media!

To keep up to date on what we're doing and to have your say on how the project develops:

Follow us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

Join us on [LinkedIn](#)

## Email us!

For **newsletter** enquiries, please use: [broadbandnews@cswbroadband.org.uk](mailto:broadbandnews@cswbroadband.org.uk)

For **all other enquiries**, please use: [broadband@cswbroadband.org.uk](mailto:broadband@cswbroadband.org.uk)

So that you don't miss out on any important news updates from the CSW Broadband team, please ensure that these are enabled in your firewall.

If you no longer wish to receive our updates, please click [UNSUBSCRIBE](#).

To find out more about the project, please visit the [CSW Broadband website](#).

